

From top: Tap dancing shoes, Toronto's CN Tower, Strictly Ballroom, a Strictly Come Dancing score card, The Thorn Birds, Natalie Wood, a Triumph Stag and a French horn

The prized possession you value above all others... My house in Camden, north London. It's a Victorian two-up-two-down. I paid £149,000 for it 14 years ago when I was broke. I had to borrow from a loan shark to get the deposit, but it's worth about £600,000 now. It represents security.

The unqualified regret you wish you could amend... I wish I'd kept studying music. I played the French horn and trumpet at school in Ballarat, Australia, but I let it go when I left at 15. I bought a new trumpet a while ago and plan to start playing again.

The way you would spend your fantasy 24 hours, with no travel restrictions...

A big breakfast in a dirty old diner in New York, followed by a walk through Bois de Vincennes in Paris, then a swim and surf on Tamarama Beach in Sydney. I'd have lunch at Icebergs Italian restaurant on Bondi beach with lots of LPR – Laurent-Perrier Rosé champagne – then I'd sleep it off in the sunshine on Primrose Hill – I love the view of London. I'd start the evening with a cocktail at the CN Tower in Toronto, then watch a West End show. After a dinner with celebrity friends – Nancy Dell'Olio is always good for a party – I'd go clubbing till dawn at Heaven!

The temptation you wish you could resist... Pepperoni Passion pizzas from Domino's. I get two at a time, but I could eat ten.

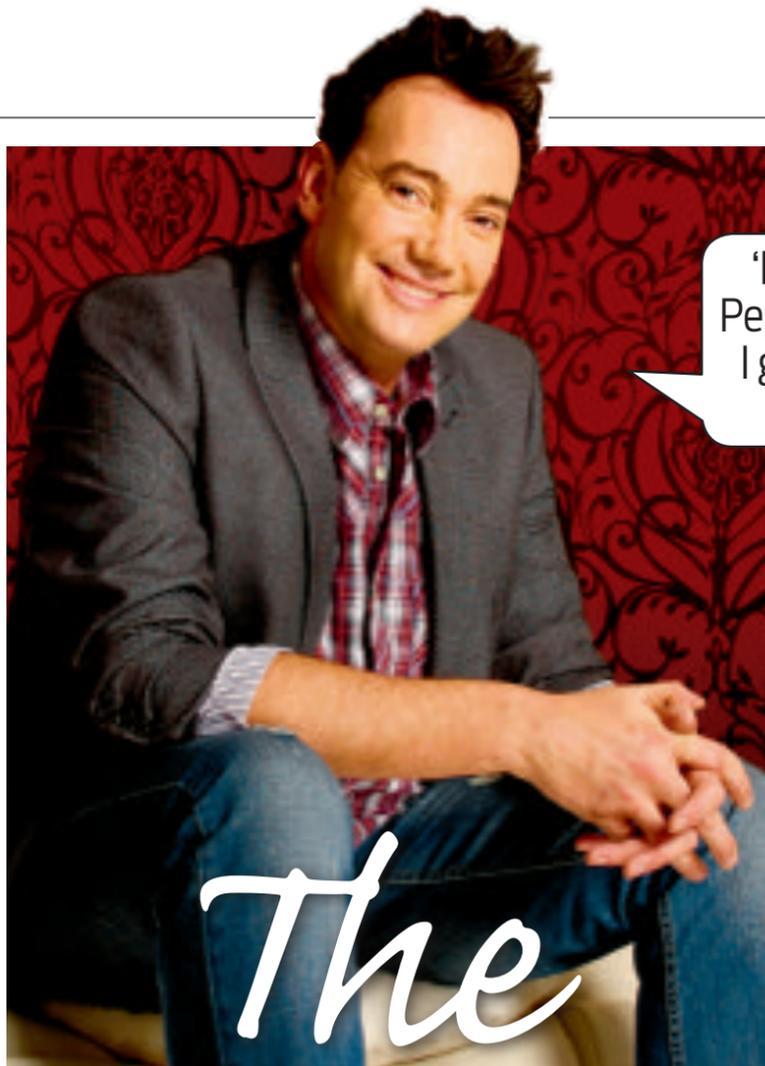
The book that holds an everlasting resonance... The Thorn Birds by the Australian author Colleen McCullough. I read it when I was 17 and it was the first book I actually enjoyed.

The priority activity if you were the Invisible Man for a day... I'd sneak around theatre dressing rooms and listen to the bitching – it's hilarious.

The pet hate that makes your hackles rise... People chewing with their mouths open. Yuck!

The film you can watch time and time again... I've seen Strictly Ballroom about 40 times and love it. It always reminds me of when I was trying to make a living as a drag queen.

The person who has influenced you most... American theatre director and choreographer Susan Stroman. She had me choreograph Crazy For You in South Africa in 1994. It gave me professional credibility that went beyond dancing and led to other work – so years later, indirectly, it got me Strictly.



'I can't resist Domino's Pepperoni Passion pizzas. I get two at a time but I could eat ten!'

The poem that touches your soul... My Country is an iconic poem about Australia by Dorothea McKellar. I read it and I can smell the eucalyptus trees in the Outback.

The misapprehension about yourself you wish you could erase... That I'm nasty. I'm a generous and loving person, but I'm deadly serious about my work.

The event that altered the course of your life and character... When I got the phone call in 1982 telling me I had a part in West Side Story in Melbourne.

The crime you would commit knowing you could get away with it... I'm not sure exactly what I'd do but I know it would be a crime of passion.

The song that means most to you... The Greatest Love Of All by Whitney Houston. I always sang it at auditions.

The happiest moment you will cherish forever... When I first got a complicated tap dance move right in 1993. I thought I was rubbish but I suddenly did this sequence and I was euphoric.

The saddest time that shook your world... Breaking up with my partner Lloyd. We were together for 12 years, but it ended in November 2005 and I was heartbroken.

The unfulfilled ambition that continues to haunt you... I'd love to be a famous singer with a diva's voice.

The philosophy that underpins your life... Be honest with yourself and only do things for the right reason.

The order of service at your funeral... I'd insist on an audition process for who gets to do the eulogy – and the audience would be given Strictly-style score cards to produce once it's done! There'd be plenty of LPR afterwards and I want my ashes dropped out of a plane at 30,000ft above Australia so my dust would settle across the country.

The way you want to be remembered... As a fun-loving gentle giant who told the truth. And with a loud Boooo!

The Plug... Craig won BBC2's Maestro At The Opera last night. If you missed it, catch up on BBC iPlayer, www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/ ■

As told to Rob McGibbon

The DEFINITE ARTICLE

We ask a celebrity a set of devilishly probing questions – and only accept THE definitive answer. This week: Strictly judge Craig Revel Horwood

The figure from history for whom you'd most like to buy a pie and a pint... I'd love to meet Natalie Wood and find out what happened on that boat. [Wood drowned in 1981 on a boating trip with her husband, actor Robert Wagner, and Christopher Walken.]

The piece of wisdom you would pass on to a child... Tell the truth. I got caught shoplifting a pencil when I was 11 and tried to hide it from my parents. When I confessed I felt so much better.

The unlikely interest that engages your curiosity... I only passed my driving test last year, and bought a 1973 Triumph Stag Mark II V8. I get a kick out of it – and for me to like cars is very unlikely!

The treasured item you lost and wish you could have again... My innocence. I lost it at 17 by sleeping with an Aussie TV star in exchange for dance classes.

The unending quest that drives you on... I seek perfection in everything I do, but sadly I rarely find it.

PS...

After Ali G, Borat and Brüno, Sacha Baron Cohen's latest comic creation *The Dictator* arrives in cinemas. Jill Halfpenny stars in a new production of *Abigail's Party* at London's Wyndham's Theatre. And Sir Tom Jones' covers album *Spirit In The Room* is out Monday



NEXT WEEK

Let Rolf Harris show you how to paint The Queen, then enter our Jubilee portrait competition ● Find out what really makes Her Majesty laugh ● And try your hand at our special Jubilee recipes, dreamt up by the nation's favourite chefs